

# INTRODUCTION OF THE CITIZENS INVOLVEMENT IN CAMPAIGNS (CIVIC) ACT

**HON. THOMAS E. PETRI**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 12, 2007*

Mr. PETRI. Madam Speaker, today Representative PAUL KANJORSKI and I are introducing bipartisan legislation to establish a program of limited tax credits and tax deductions to get average Americans more involved in the political process. This bill, the Citizens Involvement in Campaigns (CIVIC) Act, will broaden the base of political contributors and limit the influence of big money donors in federal elections.

We need to take a fresh look at innovative approaches to campaign finance reform, with special attention paid to ideas that encourage, and not restrict, greater participation in our campaigns. Toward this end, I have been advocating tax credits and deductions for small political contributions for many years. An updated tax credit system would be a simple and effective means of balancing the influence of big money donors and bringing individual contributors back to our campaigns. The impact of this counterweight will reduce the burden of raising money, as well as the appearance of impropriety that accompanies the money chase.

Most would agree that the ideal way to finance political campaigns is through a broad base of donors. But, as we are all painfully aware, the economic realities of modern-day campaigning lead many candidates to focus most of their efforts on collecting funds from a few large donors. This reality alienates many Americans from the political process.

The concept of empowering small donors is not a new idea. For example, from 1972 to 1986, the federal government offered a tax credit for small political contributions. This provided an incentive for average Americans to contribute to campaigns in small amounts while simultaneously encouraging politicians to solicit donations from a larger pool of contributors. Currently, 6 geographically and politically diverse States (Oregon, Minnesota, Ohio, Virginia, Arkansas, and Arizona) offer their own tax credits for political contributions. These state-level credits vary in many respects, but all share the same goal of encouraging average Americans to become more involved.

The CIVIC Act can begin the process of building this counterweight for federal elections. This bill is designed to encourage Americans who ordinarily do not get involved in politics beyond casting a vote every 2 or 4 years (that is, if they bother to vote at all) to become more active participants in our political process.

The CIVIC Act will reestablish and update the discontinued federal tax credit. Taxpayers can choose between a 100 percent tax credit for political contributions to Federal candidates or national political parties (limited to \$200 per taxable year), or a 100 percent tax deduction (limited to \$600 per taxable year). Both limits, of course, are doubled for joint returns. As long as political parties and candidates promote the existence of these credits, the program can have a real impact and aid in making elections more grassroots affairs than they are today.

A limited tax credit for political contributions can be a bipartisan, cost-efficient method for helping balance the influence of large money donors in the American electoral process. Instead of driving away most Americans from participation in political life, we can offer an invitation for citizens to play a larger role in political campaigns. It seems to me that this will be a fruitful way to clean up our system, while at the same time convincing Americans that they actually have a meaningful stake in elections.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. RANDY NEUGEBAUER**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 12, 2007*

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Speaker, on Friday, March 9, 2007, I was absent from Rollcall votes 132, 133, 134 and 135 due to official business.

Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on Rollcall vote 132, the rule providing for consideration of H.R. 720, the Water Quality Financing Act of 2007.

On Rollcall 133 for the Baker Amendment to H.R. 720, I would have voted "aye." I strongly oppose extending Davis-Bacon requirements for construction under H.R. 720.

On Rollcall vote 134, the motion to recommit H.R. 720, I would have voted "aye."

Finally, on Rollcall vote 135, final passage of H.R. 720, I would have voted "nay."

I ask that my statement appear in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

## HONORING LYNBROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**HON. TOM DAVIS**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 12, 2007*

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Lynbrook Elementary School on their 50th anniversary.

Located in Springfield, Virginia, Lynbrook Elementary School opened its doors on February 11, 1957. Although it opened on that day and was dedicated a month later, the school continued to take shape over the next twenty years as the local population boomed and the true needs of the community were realized. An air-conditioning system, a gymnasium, a music room, additional classrooms and "the pod" were all added to create the Lynbrook that we know today. Additionally, in 1976 a contest was held to select a new school mascot. Out of this contest, and the imagination of a young Wee Lane Yee, Lenny the Leprechaun was born.

The school continued to evolve through the end of the last century. In the 1980's many of Lynbrook's long standing traditions, including "Shamrock Shindigs" and the medieval fair, were started. Also, the students began publishing the schools first newspaper, The Four Leaf Clover, which remains in circulation today.

Lynbrook strives to stay true to its long standing mission statement: to provide a safe environment where all students will become

lifelong learners and develop a positive sense of self-worth and an appreciation among students, staff and community for all diverse backgrounds and experiences.

To that end, the school is constantly seeking to improve its strong relations with its students, parents and community. The students' academic, social and emotional learning are met utilizing proven instructional strategies. Families are encouraged to participate in PTA events, such as: family nights, socials, concerts, student programs and cultural events. Additionally, Lynbrook has been repeatedly recognized for its students' active participation in the Marine Corps Marathon Healthy Kid Fun Run. All of these factors demonstrate a concerted effort on behalf of the school's faculty to mold the young people at Lynbrook Elementary into well rounded, high-functioning adolescents.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I would like to commend and congratulate all of the students, faculty and parents who have played such an integral part in the establishment and growth of this fine academic institution. I call upon my colleagues to join me in congratulating Lynbrook Elementary School on its 50th anniversary and in wishing them many more years of continued academic success.

## IN MEMORY OF DAVID IVORY

**HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 12, 2007*

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor David Ivory, former Fort Worth city manager, who passed away on Friday, March 9, 2007. Mr. Ivory was known by many as a loyal, trustworthy, and dedicated public servant.

Mr. Ivory served his country for two years in Korea, achieving the rank of Lieutenant. In 1973, he received his master's degree in public administration from Brigham Young University. He also served in the Utah state legislature for a brief time.

After moving to the City of Fort Worth, Mr. Ivory served in many City Hall positions, ultimately being named city manager in 1989. His achievements include involvement in numerous economic developments, such as the annexation of the Perot Group's 5600 acres in North Fort Worth and the creation of Alliance Airport.

Mr. Ivory was 62 years old, at the time of his passing. He is survived by his wife, Margery; his son, Charles; and his daughter, Angela. I would like to extend my sincerest condolences to the Ivory family; my thoughts are with them as they endure this difficult time. The City of Fort Worth has lost a devoted public servant and a great man.

## HONORING THE LIFE OF PRIVATE KELLY YOUNGBLOOD, U.S. ARMY, OF MESA, ARIZONA

**HON. JOE DONNELLY**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 12, 2007*

Mr. DONNELLY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the sacrifice of Private Kelly